

The Old Paths

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"Tell Us Plainly"

Jarrod Jacobs

As Jesus met people and taught them, He encountered many who were interested in learning the truth. He met others, however, who had ulterior motives. Though they spoke the "right things", they had another purpose in asking the questions that they asked. On one occasion, a group asked Jesus, "*How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.*" Jesus answered them, "*I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in my Father's name, bear witness about me*" (Jn. 10:24-25). Though the Jews had ulterior motives behind this question, the request they made is one that all Christians need to take to heart. In teaching God's word to others, whether in a public or private setting, the best thing to do is tell people plainly what the Bible says. Why is this necessary?

We Must Speak Plainly Because Souls Are At Stake.

Jesus taught that there is nothing more important than the soul, for nothing can equal its value (Matt. 16:26). When people exchange their soul for some worldly prize, they are being short-changed! God thought that the souls of men were important enough to send His only begotten Son to die for them (Jn. 3:16). Jesus died as a sacrifice because of the importance of man's soul (Gen. 3:15; II Cor. 5:20-21).

Knowing this, let us ask ourselves if we are speaking as plainly as we can about salvation and how to obtain salvation today!

We Must Speak Plainly Because The Apostles Spoke Plainly.

In the midst of a crowd who had crucified Jesus a month and a half earlier, Peter said, "*Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ*" (Acts 2:36). I wonder if some there missed the point and did not understand that they were found guilty of crucifying Christ?

When threatened with their very lives, the apostles would not be quieted. They preached Christ and Him crucified to those who had the authority to kill them (Acts 5:29-34). They knew the importance of one's soul, and so they spoke plainly (II Cor. 3:12).

We Must Speak Plainly To Expose False Teachers.

Many times false teachers will hide behind vague words and subtleties in order to fool people. Jesus warned that false teachers would appear as sheep (Matt. 7:15), but were really "*grievous wolves*" (read also: Acts 20:29-31). Jesus said that the false teachers of His day were hypocrites (Matt. 23:2-12). The Bible says these people shipwrecked some brethren's faith (II Tim. 2:16-18), and taught things contrary to God's word (Rom.

16:17). Are we afraid of plainness of speech? "*Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them*" (Eph. 5:11).

We Must Speak Plainly Because The Truth Has Nothing To Fear.

In speaking plainly, we will not have to worry about people misunderstanding us. It is a sad occurrence to see a man have to "explain" or "re-explain" himself because he did not speak plainly enough, but it happens sometimes. In contrast, if we make it a practice to speak plainly, then when we need corrected, those who know the truth can help us learn the whole truth. Apollos stands out as a good example of this. When first introduced to him, he knew only the baptism of John. Yet, because of his plainness of speech, Aquila and Priscilla were able to teach him, "*the way of God more accurately.*" The end result was that he went on to teach others and, "*greatly helped those who through grace had believed*" (Acts 18:24-28).

Please know that when one speaks plainly, that does not mean that he speaks rudely! Jesus, Peter, Paul and others spoke plainly, but not rudely. There is a difference! Let us think about these things and ask ourselves if we are speaking plain enough to lead someone to Christ!

Conclusion

Please understand that though these people requested that Christ speak "plainly", they had ulterior motives for making this request. This is seen clearly in John 10. Christ spoke plainly, and His actions also declared exactly who He is (Jn. 10:25, 32). May we, as God's children, be as plain-spoken as Christ so we can lead precious souls to Christ.

DEFILING THE BODY

Jarrold Jacobs

In the Bible we read about how one may defile his own body. Let us look at some things that do this. We may be surprised at the ways that one may become defiled.

Thinking On The Wrong Things Can Defile A Person.

Yes, my thoughts can defile me and bring about my spiritual downfall if I am not careful! Notice the words of Jesus: *"But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this defiles a person. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornications, theft, false witness, blasphemies: These are what defile a person..."* (Matt. 15:18-20). If I think on sinful, evil things, they will defile me! Why is this the case? This is because when I begin thinking about sin and evil, it usually will not be long before I begin to do that very thing that has been occupying my mind! In connection with this, let us see what Paul wrote. *"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things"* (Phil. 4:8). Therefore, I can see that the thoughts I have and maintain are up to me. Also, I can choose whether or not I will think upon the things that will bring about my being defiled or the things that will bring about my cleansing! I must examine myself and my thoughts. Evil, filthy thoughts can defile me and can lead to my spiritual ruin in a devils' Hell!

One's Own Tongue Can Defile Him.

Let none be ignorant on this subject; if we say things we shouldn't, we can defile our body. James said, *"the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining (defiling, KJV) the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell"* (Jas. 3:6). The tongue is small (Jas. 3:5), and yet it can defile a man if he does not have control of it! This control begins by thinking on proper things (Phil. 4:8). This is because if we fill our minds with sin and evil, this will be what comes out. Likewise, if we fill our minds with those things that are pure and holy, this will be what comes out! Paul taught that *"filthy communication"* must be put away from us (Col. 3:8). Lying has no place in the life of a Christian, either (Eph. 4:25; Col. 3:9; Rev. 21:8). Let us never forget that we will go to Hell for what we say just like we could go to Hell for sinful actions!

Let Us Heed The Warning Of God.

Just as God has warned us about sins of the mind and tongue that defile the body, so also God warns us about actions which defile the body. *"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's*

Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple" (I Cor. 3:16-17). Besides defiling our body by our thoughts or speech, the Bible teaches when one engages in sexual relations outside of marriage, he has defiled his body (I Cor. 6:18-20; Heb 13:4). This includes sins of adultery, as well as homosexual sins. All of these can defile the body (I Tim. 1:9-10). It is plainly stated that this is a sin "against" your own body! God has spoken plainly and given a clear warning that defiling the body results in an eternity in Hell. Let us do all we can to keep ourselves pure in God's sight (I Tim. 5:22).

David Said: The blessed man will not associate with evil people, *"But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night"* (Ps. 1:1-2).

Something to Think About...

Is the Bible your delight, or something that is keeping you from doing what you like???

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